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ACTION ARA 18

INFO OCT 01,SSO 00,NSCE 00,CIAE 00,DODE 00,JPM 04,H 02,INR 07,L 03,
NSAE 00,NSC 10,P 03,RSC 01,PRS 01,SS 20,USIA 12,AID 28,O 02,
SY 03,OPR 02,RSR 01,118 W

907 113 052

PR 072215Z SEP 69
FM AMEMBASSY RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 630
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONGEN RECEIFE
AMCONGEN SAO PAULO
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101284

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Declassified
Authority: 43265 By:
Amanda Weimer Date:
05-12-2015

SUBJECT: MILITARY REACTION TO GOB RELEASE OF PRISONERS

1. POLOFF SPOKE TODAY WITH NATIONALISTIC ARMY COLONEL WHO COMMANDS SMALL GARRISON IN RIO DE JANEIRO AND WHO HAS PROVEN HIGHLY RELIABLE INFORMANT ON OCCASIONS WHEN HE WILLING TO TALK. COLONEL BELIEVES GOB HAS BEEN SO WEAKENED BY ITS ACTION IN KIDNAPPING OF AMBASSADOR ELBRICK THAT THERE "NO DOUBT IT WILL FALL WITHIN A FEW DAYS". HE STATED THAT TRIUMVIRATE WAS ALREADY VERY WEAK BEFORE KIDNAPPING DUE TO WEAKNESS OF ARMY MIN LYRA TAVARES, RESENTMENT WITHIN THE OFFICER CORPS OVER POWER GRAB BY MILITARY MINISTERS AND THEIR LACK OF CANDOR IN HANDLING OF COSTA E SILVA'S ILLNESS, AND INHERENT UNWORKABILITY OF TRIUMVIRATE FORM IN BRAZILIAN CONTEST. HE LEFT NO DOUBT THAT HE, LONG A BELIEVER IN MILITARY UNITY ALTHOUGH UNHAPPY WITH IA-5, NOW CONSIDERS THAT ANY CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT WILL BE FOR THE BETTER. (SOURCE IS PERSONALLY AND POLITICALLY CLOSE TO LABOR MIN-PASSARINHO.)

2. ALTHOUGH COLONEL DID NOT STATE HIS PERSONAL OPINION, HE DID DISCRIBE FEELINGLY THE VIEW OF YOUNGER OFFICERS. IN ESSENCE: (1) AMBASSADOR ELBRICK FACILITATED THE KIDNAPPING BY LACK OF SECURITY; (2) A BAD PRECEDENT HAS BEEN SET AND COUNTRY CAN NOW EXPECT A WAVE OF SIMILAR ACTIONS AGAINST

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INFO: CJCS-1 DJS-3 SJCS-1 J3-12 J5-2 NMCC-1 SECDEF-7 ASD/ISA-9
GC-1 ASD/PA-1 DIA-15 CSA-1 CNO-10 CSAF-1 CMC-3 FILE-1(69)/TLJ

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PAGE 02 RIO DE 07323 072345Z
GENERALS, GOVERNMENT MINISTERS, AND OTHER DIPLOMATS; (3) RELEASING PRISONERS WAS A DEMONSTRATION OF GOB'S AND TRIUMVIRATE'S WEAKNESS; (4) IN RECENT YEARS MILITARY OFFICERS HAVE LED A "DOG'S LIFE" OF ARRESTING MANY PEOPLE THEY DID NOT WANT TO, ENGAGING IN ACTS OF REPRESSION WHICH OFTEN REVOLTED THEM, BECOMING "JAILERS", FACING PUBLIC HOSTILITY, AND LIVING WITH THE THREATS OF ATTACKS UPON THEIR PERSONS AND FAMILY. (THE LOW-PAY COMPLAINT WAS ALSO WORKED IN.) THEY HAVE ENDURED ALL THIS BECAUSE IT WAS NECESSARY TO PREVENT BRAZIL FROM BECOMING ANOTHER CUBA, AND NOW THEY SEE ALL THEIR SACRIFICE COME TO NAUGHT WITH THE RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS. SOURCE EMPHASIZED THAT NO ELEMENT OF ANTI-AMERICANISM INVOLVED IN THIS ATTITUDE, AND THAT ALL OF MILITARY WOULD BE HAPPY TO SEE AMBASSADOR SAFELY LIBERATED.

3. COLONEL STATED THAT GOB HAS NO ONE ON ITS SIDE EXCEPT ARMY MIN LYRA, III ARMY COMMANDER MEDICI, AND MILITARY HOUSEHOLD CHIEF PORTELA. AS LEADING PROPOONENT OF GOVERNMENTAL CHANGE HE CITED VILA MILITARY COMMANDER DUTRA CASTILHO, WHO HE SAID MIGHT POSSIBLY BECOME PRESIDENT. CLOSE BEHIND IS I ARMY COMMANDER SYSENO SARMENTO, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS LIKEABLE, POPULAR, AND BASICALLY A "CIVILIST" (LIKE SOURCE). ALBUQUERQUE LIMA HAS GAINED STRENGTH RAPIDLY IN PAST WEEK, AND YOUNGEST OFFICERS WHO ARE HIS MAINSTAY ARE NOW VERY EXCITED. GENERAL MONIZ DE ARAGAO, ALTHOUGH "VERY VAIN", WILL PROBABLY SUPPORT ALBUQUERQUE OR ANYONE ELSE. CASSATED COLONEL BOAVENTURA CAVALCANTI, INTERIOR MIN'S BROTHER, REMAINS VERY POPULAR AND TOGETHER WITH CARLOS LACERDA SUPPORTS ALBUQUERQUE. (COLONEL USED WORD "RADICALES" IN REFERRING TO ALBUQUERQUE LIMA GROUP, BUT DID NOT APPEAR CONCERNED THAT HE COULD BECOME PRESIDENT. NO MATTER WHO TAKES OVR HE EXPECTS MUCH "HARDENING" OF GOVERNMENT.)

4. COLONEL IDENTIFIED A THIRD ARMY GROUPING WHICH MIGHT BE ABLE TO BRIDGE DIVISION BETWEEN "PORTELA GROUP" AND ITS MANY OPPONENTS. THAT IS "ESTADO MAIOR" GROUP WHICH MIGHT PUT ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF ORLANDO GEISEL INTO PREKIS. HOWEVER, MUCH MORE LIKELY THAT CANDIDATE OF THIS GROUP WILL BE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF MURICY. (SOURCE IN RECENT MONTHS HAS GROWN CLOSE TO MURICY, HELPING HIM AS A SPEECHWRITER).

PAGE 2 OF 3
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PAGE 03 RIO DE 07323 072345Z

5. PRESENT SITUATION IN COLONEL'S VIEW IS SO BAD THAT POSSIBILITY OF OPEN CONFLICT WITH MILITARY EXISTS. MAJOR REASON FOR THIS IS THAT NAVY FOR FIRST TIME NOW HAS AMBITIONS TO RUN THE COUNTRY. HE BLAMES LYRA FOR LETTING NAVY GET SUCH IDEAS. HE IS SURE MANY COB OPPONENTS WITHIN ARMY WILL REACH AGREEMENT AMONG THEMSELVES VERY SOON.

6. EMBASSY-ARMA COMMENT: SINCE SOURCE IS INTELLIGENT, ARTICULATE, PROFESSIONALLY RESPECTED, AND POLITICALLY ACTIVE HIS VIEWS MERIT ATTENTION. DESPITE HIS EFFORT TO PROVIDE A TOUR D'HORIZON IT IS CLEAR HIS SYMPATHIES AND PERSONAL INTEREST LIES WITH MURICY.

ELBRICK

NOTE: WHITE HOUSE PASS SECRET SERVICE.

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PAGE 3 OF 3

26573